

Harper

953
H294
lit

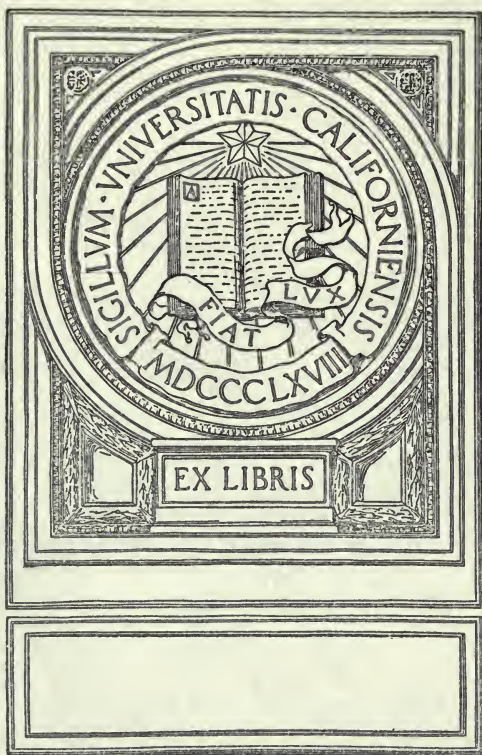
UC-NRLF




⌘B 353 498

YD065916

953 H294 lit



THE
LITTLE BOY'S SOLILOQUY



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2007 with funding from
Microsoft Corporation

THE
LITTLE BOY'S SOLILOQUY

THE LITTLE BOY'S SOLILOQUY

BY
HENRY HOWARD HARPER



PRIVATELY PRINTED
FOR COMPLIMENTARY DISTRIBUTION ONLY
BOSTON MCMXX

953
H2

*Copyright, 1920, by
Henry Howard Harper*

TO THE
LIBRARY OF THE
CONGRESS

THE LITTLE BOY'S SOLILOQUY

I think there must be something wrong
With life's affairs, or else with me,
For home and loved ones all are gone;
And playmates now I never see.
It didn't use to be this way
At home when father was alive,
But now the people where I stay
All seem so strange! How things have changed!

My mother used to sing to me
And tuck me in my little bed,
But now these strangers where I live
Seem not to care if I am fed
Or clothed, or happy, cold or sad;
They say I'm not like other boys,
Because I'm only an orphan lad.
Ah, cruel fate that made me so!

Three years ago, when I was eight,
My father heard his country's call,
Left mother and me alone and sad
To fear what evil might befall
Ere he returned from over-sea.
Then came the message, sad but true,
That made us two, instead of three.
What changes Time and Fate have brought!

Too soon my mother's grief and tears
Benumbed her form and dimmed her eyes,
And Christmas eve, when all was still,
Her spirit joined him in the skies.
This war, with all its train of death,
Has robbed me of a father's care,
Has stilled my mother's panting breath,
And left me friendless and forlorn!

Somehow, as things appear to me,
The world has changed, and people too,
For mother kissed away my tears
And taught me what to say and do;
But now I never seem to please,
It matters not how hard I try;
And hope and joy and play and ease
Have fled since mother passed away!

Though father's life his country claimed
To vindicate the Human Cause,
His homeless waif, these people say,
Must now abide by Nature's laws,
Whose hard decree that such as I,
Like galley-slaves, are born to woe,—
To drudge and serve until they die;
And thus my trials have scarce begun!

From dawn till dark, with weary tread,
My never-ending tasks extend;
No play, no mates but hoe and rake,
I welcome every long day's end.
Then after frugal bread and whey
I often hear these grumbling words:
"You've scarcely earned your board today!
Now off to bed, you worthless hound!"

Then up the creaky attic stairs,
With heavy heart I grope my way
Into my lonely lampless den,
With tumbled bed of musty hay,
And dingy walls that mock my fear.
So changed are things from what they were,
With downy bed, and mother near!
But God protects me through the night.

And yet my fate I'd not bemoan,
Nor scorn my tasks, howe'er abhorred,
If only some kind word or act
Or gentle look were my reward.
A cheerful word, or tender smile,
Would cheat my lot of half its gloom
And help to make life seem worth while;
But such is not an orphan's meed!

But hapless orphan though I be,
I'll *brave* their taunts! I'll run the race
And prove the mettle of which I'm made!
I'll not be downcast, sad of face,
Or shed another weakling's tear!
A brave and honored soldier's name
I proudly own. Away with fear!
The thing to face them with is pluck!

My mother often told of boys
Of more obscure and menial birth,
Whose manhood deeds and storied fame
Are known and praised throughout the earth —
How great achievement oft is born
Of early hardship, toil and woe,
And youthful days, at first forlorn,
Will ripen into richer life.

Her parting words I well recall, —
That all the tiny stars above
Are eyes of angels looking down
Upon the little ones they love;
And when her spirit reached the skies
There'd be another little star
To watch o'er me with loving eyes
And guide me through life's mystic paths.





14 DAY USE
RETURN TO DESK FROM WHICH BORROWED
LOAN DEPT.

This book is due on the last date stamped below, or
on the date to which renewed.

Renewed books are subject to immediate recall.

11 Jul '61 RC	
REC'D LD	
JUL 12 1961	

LD 21A-50m-12,'60
(B6221s10)476B

General Library
University of California
Berkeley

M174073

953
H294
lit

THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA LIBRARY

